



Motivation

Lesson code: CG9J-Q7NA-GZUQ

INTERMEDIATE

1 Warm up

Look at the words below. Discuss which ideas you think are most motivating for office staff.

the sound of old-fashioned typewriters clear desks pleasant-smelling offices
in-office doctors treadmill desks free food arcade machines
slides instead of stairs

2 Vocabulary - Key words

Match the underlined words to their definitions below.

1. When I saw my childhood home, I was full of nostalgia.
2. According to the survey, workers are more stressed than in the past.
3. They regularly perfume the office to get rid of unwanted smell.
4. Joe is not at work today. He has a day off.
5. Living 5 minutes from my work is very convenient.
6. After jogging in the park for an hour, I decided to have a 30-minute nap.
7. It was time for lunch, but Mike wasn't hungry because he'd just eaten a snack.
8. The manager's compliment was very sincere. It was clear that he wasn't pretending.

- a. a collection of people's opinions
- b. a day when you are not working on a normal working day
- c. a short sleep
- d. a small amount of food eaten between meals
- e. a strong feeling of desire for things, people or situations in the past
- f. genuine, honest
- g. give a pleasant smell to something
- h. located where there is easy access to a place



3 Find the information

You are going to read an article about how modern companies are motivating their staff. Answer the questions below with the ideas from Exercise 1.

1. Which idea does The Times newspaper use to motivate staff?
2. Which idea does Tatler use to increase productivity?
3. What do companies need Aroma Co for?
4. Which device motivates staff and also has health benefits?
5. What does Google offer to motivate staff?

THE
INDEPENDENT

Bosses are inventing surprising ways of making us work harder.

The special devices that companies use to motivate staff *Adapted from The Independent, by*

Gillian Orr, 27 August 2014

- 1 Journalists at the UK's 'The Times' newspaper received a surprise this week when the noise of old-fashioned typewriters was heard in the newspaper's new offices. But it's not just nostalgia that has inspired this. It is suggested that the extra noise will increase energy levels and help reporters to meet deadlines.
- 2 We shouldn't be surprised. Offices these days are filled with little devices designed to motivate staff. Another publication, Tatler, operates a clear-desk policy. Sure, it may look pleasing, but according to a survey by the National Association of Professional Organisers, having more space on desks can also increase productivity by up to 30 per cent.
- 3 And if an office has a very pleasant smell, then it's very possible that it's there on purpose. Companies such as Aroma Co regularly perfume offices in order to stimulate the workforce. And the sweet smell of success? Lavender will relax employees, lower stress levels and reduce absenteeism.
- 4 In-office doctors are certainly convenient and they have also reduced the number of staff members who take days off.
- 5 Treadmill desks are becoming more popular. They offer lots of health benefits and also boost job performance, according to the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management. But after all that walking, workers are certainly going to want to lie down. However, research suggests that bosses should encourage them to rest. Although it might seem like a bad idea, a short nap is an excellent way to motivate employees.
- 6 Silicon Valley is leading the workplace revolution. With their slides, games rooms, arcade machines and endless free snacks (especially at Google), their workplaces look like adult theme parks.
- 7 But is it all just a way to attract the best applicants and make sure workers rarely leave the office? Or do these machines and devices actually increase productivity?
- 8 Alison Price, a psychologist and author, believes that workers who enjoy their office environment are likely to work harder. "It's positive psychology. There is a lot of evidence that happy employees are more productive," Price says. "They are also more creative, generate more sales and are less likely to take time off."
- 9 Of course, the tech industry has plenty of cash to spend on these things. Smaller companies should just remember that, according to Price, a sincere "good job" from the boss is certain to boost an employee's productivity.



4 Phrases from the text

What are the benefits of the ideas and devices mentioned in the article? Complete the phrases below with the infinitive form of verbs from the text:

1. increase energy levels (P1)
2. _____ deadlines (P1)
3. _____ staff (P2)
4. _____ stress levels (P3)
5. _____ absenteeism (P3)
6. _____ job performance (P5)
7. _____ the best applicants (P7)
8. _____ more sales (P8)

5 Checking understanding

Read the rest of the article and put 'T' (True) or 'F' (False) next to the statements below. Explain why the false statements are wrong.

1. Having the sound of typewriters in a modern office is only about nostalgia.
2. Having a clear desk can increase productivity by up to 50%.
3. The smell of lavender makes employees less stressed and less absent.
4. In-office doctors increase productivity.
5. Bosses should not allow employees to lie down at work.
6. Silicon Valley is changing the look of modern workplaces.
7. Employees who enjoy their workplaces do not work very hard.
8. Happy employees are more creative and make more money for the company.
9. Smaller companies can increase an employee's productivity without all these expensive devices.

6 Find the word

Find a word or phrase in the text which means:

1. nice (adjective, P2) _____
2. intentionally (phrase, P3) _____
3. give someone support or confidence (verb, P5) _____
4. a lot of, having no limit (adjective, P6) _____
5. people who apply for a job (plural noun, P7) _____
6. stop working temporarily because of some reason, e.g. illness (phrase, P8) _____



7 Prediction and speculation

Various structures and verb forms are used in English to speculate about and predict things. Look at the following sentences from the text and match them to the correct structure below.

1. Having more space on desks can also increase productivity by up to 30 per cent.
2. And if an office has a very pleasant smell, then it's very possible that it's there on purpose.
3. Workers who enjoy their office environment are likely to work harder.
4. It is suggested that the extra noise will increase energy levels and help reporters to meet deadlines.
5. But after all that walking, workers are certainly going to want to lie down.
6. A sincere "good job" from the boss is certain to boost an employee's productivity.

- a. *be certain to* + infinitive
- b. *be going to* + infinitive
- c. *be likely/unlikely to* + infinitive
- d. *can* + infinitive
- e. *It's possible/unlikely that* ...
- f. *will/won't* + infinitive

Complete the sentences below with a suitable word or structure from this exercise. Compare your answers with a partner. Who is more optimistic about improving staff motivation?

1. A cup of coffee _____ increase your energy level.
2. Allowing employees to work from home _____ boost their motivation.
3. _____ spending time on Facebook has a negative effect on work performance.
4. A very demanding boss _____ make workers more productive.
5. _____ giving employees more freedom improves their work performance.
6. Increasing workers' salaries _____ improve their job satisfaction.
7. Giving free chocolates to staff _____ improve their health.
8. Having a messy desk _____ make you work harder.
9. Giving free fruit to staff _____ improve their health.

8 Talking point

Discuss any of the following questions

1. Do you think any of these ideas would work in your company?
2. How healthy is the modern office lifestyle?
3. How do businesses typically motivate staff in your country?
4. How can companies with a low budget motivate staff?

